

CLAIMS

I/We claim:

[c1] 1. A method for managing communications from a user interface, the method comprising:

receiving user input to configure a telephony service provider system (TSPS), wherein configuration includes associating a handling method with each one of multiple call handling codes, wherein the handling method directs the TSPS in handling a call;

receiving user input to a contact management system associating at least some of multiple contacts stored in a contact management system database with one of the handling codes; and

receiving user input when a call is received that directs the TSPS how to handle a call, including contradicting a handling code previously associated with a contact, and wherein the TSPS interfaces with the contact management system and uses data from the contact management system database to handle calls.

[c2] 2. The method of claim 1, wherein handling calls comprises:
routing calls to a previously specified location, including,

a phone number;

an interactive voice response system (IVR); and

a user computer, including displaying a notification window that displays at least one item selected from a group comprising a caller number, a caller name, and at least one forwarding button the user selects to forward the call to a number.

[c3] 3. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing a notification window having an open contact button to request display of information associated with the caller from the contact management system.

[c4] 4. The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying a notification window, including a display of information associated with the caller from the contact management system.

[c5] 5. The method of claim 3, wherein the information includes:
email messages sent to the caller;
and email messages received from the caller;
calendar events that include the caller; and
documents that reference the caller.

[c6] 6. The method of claim 5, wherein the email messages, calendar events, and documents meet specific criteria as configured by the user.

[c7] 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the specific criteria includes a time and a date.

[c8] 8. The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying a call history to a user that includes information regarding previous and current calls from a caller.

[c9] 9. The method of claim 1, further comprising, in response to receiving a call, initiating a web chat session between at least two devices.

[c10] 10. The method of claim 1, wherein configuration further comprises designating an attendant device to which calls are forwarded under certain circumstances, and designating the attendant device to monitor incoming calls to the TSPS on behalf of the user.

[c11] 11. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
the TSPS receiving a call from a telephone system;
the TSPS determining a user identification (ID) from a called number;
the TSPS using a calling line identification (CLI) number and the user
identification to find a handling code associated with the CLI
number;
the TSPS using the user ID to find a current status of the user;
the TSPS using the user ID and the CLI number to access data from the
contact management system database;
the TSPS using the user ID and the CLI number to access a user profiles
database to determine a handling method for the call; and
the TSPS using the handling method, the current status of the user, the
data, and the handling code to handle the call.

[c12] 12. The method of claim 11, wherein the data includes contact data and
calendar data.

[c13] 13. A communication management system, comprising:
at least one user computer, including a storage device having standard
contact management software stored thereon, including a contact
management user interface, and a contact management database;
a telephony service provider system (TSPS) coupled to the at least one
user computer through a network, and further coupled to at least one
telephone network for receiving voice calls intended for a user of the
at least one user computer, wherein the TSPS comprises,
an interface component that communicates with
the contact management system;
at least one database that stores:
a user configuration for the user;